Unemployment rate rises to 4.5% in April

Media Release

Released 21/05/2026

Source:
Labour Force, Australia, April 2026 (/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/apr-2026)

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rose to 4.5 per cent in April, according to the latest data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Sean Crick, ABS head of labour statistics, said: 'The number of employed people fell by 19,000 in April, while the number of unemployed people rose by 33,000.'

The number of unemployed people looking for full-time work increased by 11,000, and unemployed people looking for part-time work increased by 22,000.

'Compared to what we usually see in April, more people remained unemployed this month,' Mr Crick said.

'Both full-time and part-time employment fell, by 11,000 and 8,000 people respectively.'

A drop in female employment drove the overall fall in employment, with full-time down 19,000 people, and part-time down 13,000 people.

'This is the first fall in female employment since August 2025,' Mr Crick said.

Male employment rose by 8,000 people for full-time and 5,000 for part-time.

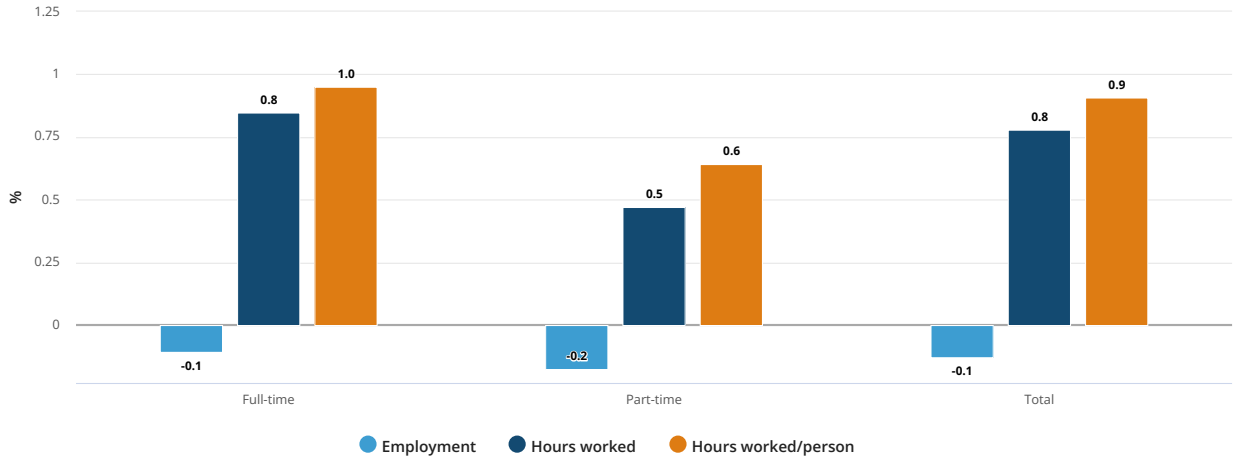
The underemployment rate fell 0.1 percentage points to 5.8 per cent in April.

Hours worked up 0.8 per cent in April

'Despite the fall in employment this month, hours worked rose by 15.8 million hours,' Mr Crick said.

'This meant that hours worked per person rose by 0.9 per cent in April.

Hours worked and Employment - monthly change



Source: Labour Force, Australia Tables 001 and 017

Trend unemployment rate remains at 4.3 per cent

‘Trend employment and hours worked grew by 0.2 and 0.3 per cent respectively,’ Mr Crick said.

‘The 2.7 per cent annual increase in hours worked grew faster than employment, which was up 1.3 per cent annually,’ Mr Crick said.

‘The underemployment rate remained at 5.9 per cent in April while the underutilisation rate remained at 10.2 per cent.’

Labour Force modernisation

The ABS is modernising how it collects data in the Labour Force Survey, continuing to publish high quality labour market statistics, while improving the respondent experience.

As outlined in the article How the ABS quality assures Labour Force data during times of change (/articles/how-abs-quality-assures-labour-force-data-during-times-change) , the ABS is undertaking extensive quality assurance on the Labour Force Survey estimates during the modernisation period. This process confirmed that there are no quality issues in the April estimates. Further information about rotation group analysis is available in Survey impacts and changes (/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/apr-2026#survey-impacts-and-changes) .

‘April successfully marked the first month of our transition to new, modern systems to collect Labour Force Survey data,’ Mr Crick said.

More information is available in the Modernising the Labour Force Survey (/media-centre/media-statements/modernising-labour-force-survey-april-2026) media statement.

We thank everyone who participated in and supported this survey.

Media notes

- The April survey reference period was from 29 March 2026 to 11 April 2026.
- The May survey reference period was from 3 May 2026 to 16 May 2026.
- Numbers may not be additive due to rounding.
- For any media requests, email media@abs.gov.au (mailto:media@abs.gov.au) or call 1300 175 070 (9am-5pm Canberra time) with your questions and deadline.
- If you would like to provide feedback or seek clarification on any of the Labour Force Modernisation changes, please email labour.statistics@abs.gov.au (mailto:labour.statistics@abs.gov.au) .
- Please attribute the 'Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)' when using our data.
- Explore our Data Crash Course (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=le2K3PNejU4&list=PLR8_RxifMwL4JQTxYclMANzga67VBlyhj&index=11) for guidance on finding and interpreting ABS data, and subscribe to our release notifications (https://www4.abs.gov.au/ausstats/notifications.NSF/Web+Pages/ABS+Email+Notification+Service?OpenDocument) to stay updated.
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